

Victorian Alliance House Tour

Sun. Aug. 24, 1975

1-5 p.m.

★ Explore 7 Victorian buildings, one a converted carriage house.

★ Several are over 100 years old.

★ 7 of the 8 residences are listed in "Here Today".

★ All buildings are within an easy 5 block walk.

★ Reception & refreshments at the last house on the tour.

★ Tour starts at 180 Liberty St.; bounded by 20th & 21st Sts., and Dolores & Guerrero Sts.

★ Donation—\$5.00



1548 So. VAN NESS
BUILT 1883

Chuchwa '73

Victorian Alliance House Tour

Welcome to the Victorian Alliance house tour. The buildings on this tour represent several pure and transitional styles of Victorian architecture dating from c.1863 to 1885. Uses of the structures have been transitional, too, as several of them have served various purposes before evolving into their present residential usage. Some of them have been greatly remodeled since their original construction.

Today, more than ever these houses contribute a strongly supportive background to the various life styles which exist within them. Each of them is a very personal statement by the owner about his special interest in the Victorian Age, whether it be stained glass, ornamental plaster, gas lighting fixtures, or memorabilia and collections of the period.

Living in these houses is fun and a constant source of wonderment at the decorative and functional inventiveness of the original builders, as the owners will attest. They hope you will share their appreciation of these houses, and will be glad to answer any questions you may have about the techniques of restoration and the sources of craftsmen and materials.

In courtesy to the owners, it is requested that there be no smoking inside the buildings.

The Victorian Alliance, which has just celebrated its second birthday, is an organization whose members share an enthusiasm for the preservation and renovation of Victorian structures. The Alliance meets on the last Wednesday of each month, enjoying illustrated lectures and demonstrations of renovation techniques and related topics. All are invited to attend the meetings.

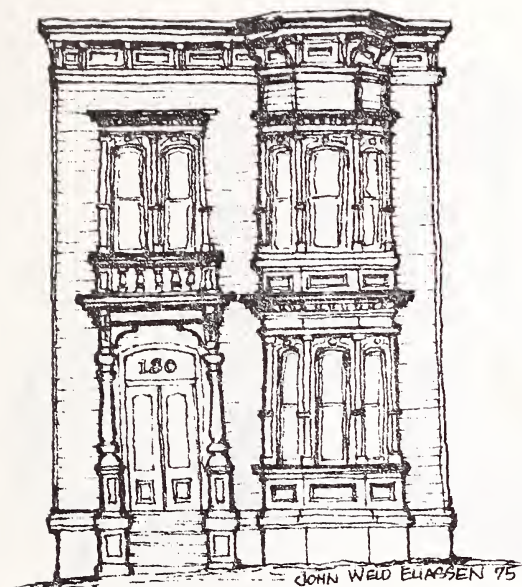
Occasionally, the Alliance sponsors field trips to areas and events of architectural interest, and members also participate in the Landmarks designation and preservation activities of the City. The Alliance is also compiling a reference file of resources - materials and craftsmen, and makes this information available to everyone who is interested.

For further information, address:

THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE
4143 - 23d Street
San Francisco 94114
Phone: TAGBOOM



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180 Liberty St.

This basically Second Empire house with its flattened arches and angular bay window was built by Charles T. Bigelow, a bricklayer, who had the water turned on on September 2, 1871. Little is known of Mr. Bigelow who is listed in the City Directories of the period as a member of the Bricklayers Protective Association, whose address he used.

Like several houses on the tour, this house has been extensively remodeled. Records indicate that this was originally a one-story, one-family house, with the second story being added in 1895. Examination of the building seems to show, however, that it has been enlarged to the rear.

The house is distinguished by pipe stem colonettes on the angular bay window, and good carved double front doors. The balcony over the front door is decorative only, a typical Victorian characteristic.

The present owner, who has had the house for nine years, has stripped and refinished much of the woodwork, and installed the chandeliers which replace "fishbowl" chandeliers installed by an earlier owner. The furniture in the house has been collected as treasures, having been discovered in resale shops. The owner dreams of finding in some basement an original, unopened barrel of assorted carnival glass, which is how this turn-of-the-century glassware was distributed, at an average cost of 8 cents per item!

The plaster rosettes are all original, and furnished the inspiration for the demonstration of the plaster restoration display which is featured in the house.

845 Guerrero St.



This house was first owned by Marsden Kershaw, a partner in Kershaw and Twing Coal Yard, who had the water connected in 1871. The house belonged to the Kershaw family until 1893. Later, the house may have been used as servants' quarters for the larger and 10-year-newer house next door, as both houses belonged to the same family from 1906 to 1951. The present owner has had the house for nine years.

The simple, well-proportioned facade of this house is an Italianate proof of the timelessness of Mies Van der Rohe's statement that "less is more." The facade below the cornice is almost square, ornamented with understated details of trim.

Inside the front door which is graced with ivy that has grown through the walls, the entrance hall has the original bannister on the staircase. The console table came from the Fox Theater, as did the crystal chandelier in the front room. The fireplace and floor in the front room are original. The present owner installed the stained glass windows which are of English and German origin.

In the dining room, the board and batten panelling was applied over the original plaster which was badly damaged in the 1906 'quake. The absolutely bananas cabinet in the dining room is a signed and dated (1920) Atwater Kent radio. The beveled glass window is 1886.

The interesting trampoline effect of the kitchen floor results from the collapse of the foundation of the rear part of the house in the 1906 unpleasantness.

On the second floor, the gracefully patterned transoms over the bedroom doors are original, and the stained glass windows have been added by the present owner.



986 Guerrero St.

This elegantly designed East-lake house was built by architect Charles Geddes for himself in 1883. He lived there until a few years before the 'quake and his widow, Sarah, sold it immediately after the 'quake. Geddes' considerable professional talents were also expressed in the now-demolished church at 21st and Capp Sts., the demolished Spreckels mansion at 21st and Howard (now South Van Ness), and an 1880 house for the same owner in the Sandwich Islands which is now a museum.

The house is distinguished for its skillful blending of architectural details. The flattened Tudor arches of the windows and the entrance portico hood, the partially fluted columns with Corinthian capitals, and the details of the ornamentation over the door and the squared bay window represent motifs from several Victorian periods.

The handsome front doors have one original sand-blasted glass pane and one acid-etched replacement. The transom is original. The pictures of the boy and girl in the entrance hall are of Geddes children, given to the present owners by a Geddes grandchild.

The house has original hardware and plaster medallions. The three fireplaces are particularly noteworthy, being elaborately simulated marble in enamel baked on metal which Mr. Geddes imported from Italy. They have been polished to their original glory by the present owners who have had the house for nine years. The details of the interior trim are as skillfully designed and executed as the exterior trim of the house. Notice the unusual sink-in-a-closet in the bedroom.

More comfortable than ever, this house has survived a period of glorious technicolor decoration as a Latino boarding house, and is now a very suitable background for the collection of the present owners. The chair at the left of the fireplace is part of the original furnishings of the house, a gift to the present owners from the granddaughter of the original owner and builder.



90 Fair Oaks St.

The origin of this house is unknown. It is first mentioned in a title search dated 1864 when Horner's Addition to the City was subdivided from Noe Rancho. At that time, John A. Crabtree was listed as the owner of the small existing cottage on the property. Water Department records show that the cottage was connected to the City water system in 1886. Originally on a double lot, this house enjoyed a south garden.

Lotta Crabtree's deed of sale of this property to C. W. Eckstein for \$1,300.00 gold coin, in 1887, is on display. At some time after 1887, the small cottage was raised and the first floor built. The present owner has had the house for five years and is gradually repairing the ravages of an asbestos shingle "improvement."

The interior includes careful restoration of plaster and hardware, and a growing collection of Victorian furniture. The small bathtub is of the type intended for servants' bathrooms for small servants.



212 Fair Oaks St.

This graceful flat-front Italianate was built in 1873 by Seeley B. Lyon, of the Mechanics Mill Co., and remained in his family until 1961. It has had only three owners since then. The present owner has been in the house three years. City water connection was made in 1894.

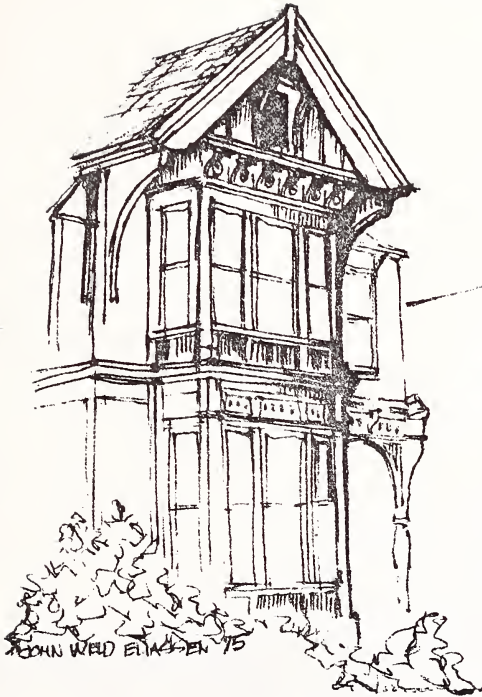
With its well-tended dooryard garden behind the original iron fence and gate, this house has always been one of the best-preserved properties in the area. Notice the unusual port hole windows in the basement.

The recessed entry opens into the hall with its original staircase. To the left is the spacious double parlor with its spectacular original hand-stencilled ceiling. As you will notice, the colors appear as fresh now as they must have been over one hundred years ago. The elaborate moldings, gold-leafed, with contrasting velvet strips, provide a suitably rich frame for the ornate ceiling. The plaster rosettes, also original, are painted to harmonize with the ceiling. The fireplace is also original.

As you go up the stairs, you will notice the traditional coffin niche at the curve of the stairs.

When the present kitchen was added to the rear of the house, newspapers dated 1896 were found in the walls of the former kitchen, now the dining room. The original carriage house has been converted to a comfortable apartment, as has the rear section of the second floor of the main house.

Returning to the front of the property, you will notice that there are windows on the south side of the house, which indicates that the house originally had a south garden.



1076 Dolores St.

This large Stick-Eastlake was built as a single-family house by Winfield Davis who had the water connected on May 7, 1885. The house was owned by the Davis family for approximately 75 years. At one time, the large carriage house at the rear of the property was remodeled to contain a billiard room, but this space has since been converted into a studio apartment.

The facade of the house shows tongue-and-groove siding on the first floor and horizontal siding on the second floor, a typical combination of materials of this period. The Tudor style half-timbering conforms with the Tudor detailing of the original wooden stair bannister. In 1915, the building was converted into two flats, and the gable, which may be original, with its elaborate Eastlake carving, was apparently raised to allow for higher ceilings in the rooms at the front of the second floor.

The spacious rooms in the interior are bereft of the original large fireplaces which an interim owner replaced with brick fireplaces, one of which still survives in the dining room. The original plaster medallions were removed and replaced with the present medallions before the now-available plaster duplicates of the originals came on the market.

The gas lighting fixtures have glass shades which are part of the owner's large collection. The irregularly-shaped music room adjacent to the dining room shows the transition to Queen Anne from the more rectangular rooms of the Stick-Eastlake period.

